>

Title : Need to set up a Central University in Darjeeling.

SHRI D. NARBULA (DARJEELING): Very recently an agreement among the Central Government, State Government and the DGHC for considering the Sixth Schedule Status to the Gorkha Hill Council, Darjeeling has been signed. So, Gorkha Hill Council, Darjeeling can be considered to be a State. I therefore, feel that the demand of a Central University of the people of Gorkha Hill Council, Darjeeling is fully justified for North Bengal University hardly caters to the interest of the hill people of Darjeeling Hills. This University overshadowed the academic development of the hills for last 43 years. The existing affiliated colleges in the Darjeeling hills follow the courses and syllabi designed by the North Bengal University, which are not mountain specific or relevant to the needs of the hills. Due to lack of teaching and research-intensive University of its own, the Darjeeling hills face problems to get the skilled qualified and trained manpower in the specific fields relevant to the Hills. Moreover the academic session of NBU does not suit the colleges of Darjeeling Hill Areas as the Darjeeling Hill have a long winter vacation of three months from December to February end.

Students and the people of the Darjeeling hills never demanded the introduction of few hill oriented courses in the colleges of Darjeeling Hills affiliated to NBU; this may confuse the whole matter. There is a strong and consensus demand of the hill people to have a separate Central University to be set up by the present Government. The formation Gorkha Hill Council under Sixth Schedule will be incomplete without a suitable university attached to it.

The Darjeeling hills are one of the hot spots of biodiversity and are very, rich in bio-resources. Studies on bio-resources, biodiversity, biotechnology for the developmental activities, even the study on cultural heritage languages in the Darjeeling Hills are lagging behind due to lack of University.

I therefore, urge upon the Central Government to fulfill the dream of the hill people of Darjeeling by setting up a full-fledged Central University under an Act of the Parliament.